1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

But in many villages instead of a communal *pedawo'gha'i* there is a separate hut at the back of each long-house for the use of the residents of each house contained in the long-house, called by the same name; or else in each house there is a *pedawo'gha'i* room known generally as *hala*,[1] with a door opening at the back of the house, separated from the rest of the house by a *binda* or low mud threshold about three feet from the back door. It is absolutely *polo* or taboo for any male to set foot in the menstruation hut or room; I once saw a son who wanted to enter the house by the back door take a flying leap from outside so as to land beyond the *binda*. In every *hala* room there is a complete set of cooking vessels and utensils for the woman to use while she is in her courses, when it is *polo* for her to touch any of the regular household articles. The menstruation hut or room is also the scene of all child-births.

There is in some big villages a resting hut for travellers or State officials, known as the *paik-gotul* or *Kos-gotul*; *paik* is the word used for a member of the old militia, and *Kos* is the general word used by all Gonds for Hindus. This may also have a stable attached.

The sketch-plan on page 105 illustrates a fairly typical Hill Maria village, crowning a mountain spur; it represents the site occupied in 1930 by the Kutru Mar village of Karangal. The long-houses here had nearly all of them bamboo fences between them and the street, running along their front about three or four feet from their front wall. The doors have been shown only in the houses in long-house no. 6. The fences only give a little privacy, and spaces useful for storing fuel; they are not garden (*bari*) enclosures. Bamboo is very plentiful around Karangal; where it is less common, these fences are absent. The stockades of thick poles at the eastern side of this village were made to afford protection from the fierce and cold wind blowing off the hills from the north-east. The Village Mother's shrine was a cylindrical basket of stones resting on five boulders in the open space between the dormitory and the *kasyeq-gaita's* house, near the latter's *udam-garia* seat of honour. This seat was a flat slab of stone resting on five thin slabs stuck vertically in the ground. The *pen-ravar* shrine of the clan-god Koruk Pen was a round hut surrounded with a bamboo fence to the east of the village by the side of the path leading to the *penda* fields; there is another shrine of this god at Nugur, a Parllo clan village a few miles away in the Indrawati valley. In Karangal the only non-Maria was a Maria-speaking Rawat herdsman, who was allowed a house site at some distance from the main street;

[1] Or *ala*; the aspirate is often dropped by Hill Marias.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

883 quite understood why—but once they realize that the enquirer is not prepared to be deceived they talk fairly freely about them.

883 485 In all these villages there are commodious rest-houses for the use of visitors and officials on tour and when they are unoccupied —and they are but seldom used officially—the boys sleep in them as their dormitories. The boys, however, are not fully organized as among the Murias, but a leader may be appointed—in Mokhpal he was called the Sian, in Chote Timnar the Peda. Sometimes an older man sleeps with them and imposes a rough sort of discipline, fining those who are absent without cause. An old Maria, Sodi Mukha, is said to have been very proud of his management of the dormitory at Mokhpal. 'Originally', I was told in this village, 'the boys used to make their house in the middle of the place and it was theirs. But when Government ordered us to make a rest-house we had to build it not as we wanted it, but as the officers wanted it.'

883 841 The girls sometimes sleep together in the house of a lonely widow, but often have their own building. This is occasionally combined with the corporate menstruation hut. The menstruating women sleep on one side and the unmarried girls on the other. It is more common, however, for such women to sleep at home and to leave the unmarried girls to themselves. They too are not organized as in the Muria ghotul, but they are fined for quarrelling and for non-attendance. Both boys and girls have regular duties. They must all bring wood for the dormitory fire. At marriages and funerals they must collect wood and make leaf-plates. In the evening the boys and girls often meet in some central place or in front of the boys' house and dance and play games.

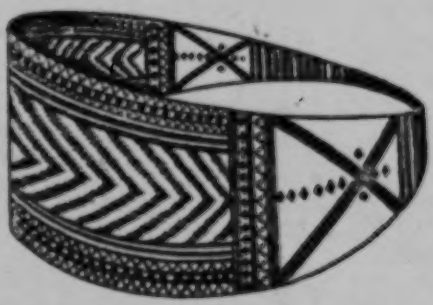
883 836 The relations between the boys and girls are not organized and disciplined as among the Murias. At marriages the members of the two dormitories may slip away together and sleep in some secluded place. At Penta the boys described how a girl would make a hole in the wall near which she slept. 'Then a boy creeps up and pokes a stick through the hole to wake her, and she creeps out to join him.' At Bara Harmamunda, the boys said that they actually went into the girls' house, though I fancy this is exceptional.

883 The Bison-horn Maria dormitory does not seem to play an important part in the social or religious life of the tribe. It is not established in the mythology; it does not serve as a school of dancing or as a place for initiation into sexual experience; there is no need in these pacific hills for village guard-rooms. Whether at any time the institution existed in a more flourishing form it is now impossible to say.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

164 State Medical Department has done much to check the spread of the disease. Malaria, as everywhere in the Indian forests, is endemic, but few suffer from enlarged spleen. Leprosy and the venereal diseases are very rare. Skin diseases are also much less common than among the more elaborately clothed and thus dirtier people of the north.

291 Men wear a small loin-cloth and sometimes a little turban. The women tie a sort of skirt, very short, round their waists: it hangs down to the knees. The breasts are covered only with [532 ornaments; when 301] visiting a bazaar girls may tie a small piece of cloth round their shoulders. They often wear a thin brass fillet round [302] the hair, and the older women use a large snood which is most becoming. Round the neck are masses of bead-necklaces, and iron or brass torcs. The bright colours of the beads and the shining brass fillets against the rich brown skin make a sight of unforgettable beauty.



Brass fillet worn by Maria women

361 The Bison-horn Maria village is laid out on the same lines as the Gond village of the Central Provinces, unlike the communal settlements of the Hill Maria, Baiga or Juang. Each house stands in its own garden which is sometimes a substantial field, and a village may cover a very large area in consequence. Often a village is composed of anything from six to twelve small hamlets, each of which represents the grouping of a family round its patriarchal head. The little huts stand among woods, on rocky hill-sides, in the shade of spreading trees. Sometimes they appear almost submerged [485 by waves of yellow sarson flowers or red jhira vegetable. 873 Each village has a substantial building for the accommodation 361 of travellers and this is used by the unmarried boys as a dormitory. The unmarried girls also sleep together, some-